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April 20, 2017



Soldiers "Strike Out" Sexual Assault

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 William Phillips



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Navy Lodge Celebrates Month of Military Child

Photos Courtesy Ana Herrera-Ruiz

The Navy Lodge Bethesda celebrated the Military child on April 12 with food, video game dancing and an egg hunt and decorated the lobby with purple decor. General Manager Ana Hererra-Ruiz said guests enjoyed dancing and eating and the event was the “talk of the lodge” the next morning at breakfast as guests were checking out.



Bethesda Notebook

Code White Exercise

There will be a Code White Exercise at Walter Reed Bethesda sometime during the week of April 24 during normal duty hours. Code White is used to notify personnel of an active shooter and to shelter-in-place. The exercise is scheduled to last no longer than 15 minutes and involve the entire hospital. During the exercise there will be not movement throughout the hospital, all hospital staff and departments will shelter-in-place, and visitors will be asked to remain where they are or may be escorted to a secure location. The exercise is being conducted to test WRB's plans and response efforts.

US Army Recruiting Command Commissioning Brief

Do you have a goal of becoming a Medical Officer in the United States Army? Or are you a leader who wants to guide subordinates in career options? If so, come to the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) presentation to find out how the Army can help you accomplish this. Programs that will be addressed include the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP) and the AMEDD Enlisted Commissioning Program (AECPRN). Additional programs will also be touched on, to include the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP), Masters in Social Work (MSW) and Physical Therapy. MAJ Adrienne Kramer, USAREC IPAP Manager, will present. The program is April 28 from 12:30 to 1:30 in the NICoE Auditorium. Registration is not required. For more information, contact Dr. Eddie Thomas at 301-319-4606 or email him at eddie.d.thomas3.civ@mail.mil.

Fleet, Family Support Center

The Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) on Naval Support Activity Bethesda offers programs intended to assist service members and their families with military life. FFSC's workshops and seminars include: job search strategies for military spouses; federal resume writing; time management; credit management; consumer financial awareness; interview skills; pre-deployment briefings; return and reunion briefings; and more. For more information, call 301-319-4087, or visit FFSC in Building 11, first floor.

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NSAB's Emergency Manager Leaving After Seven Years

By Andrew Damstedt
The Journal

Naval Support Activity Bethesda's first emergency manager said the one thing he'll miss most when he leaves for a new position at Ft. Detrick are the people he's met during his seven years on the job.

"I love talking to people. I like bragging about disaster preparedness," Ron Kunz said. "I like educating folks."

Kunz, 57, started as NSAB's emergency manager in February 2010 after retiring from active duty in the U.S. Navy in 2009.

"Mr. Kunz did an outstanding job standing up and running the emergency management and emergency dispatch programs," said NSAB Executive Director Bill Meekins. "Starting from ground zero, he built programs that are known throughout Naval District Washington. He will surely be missed at NSAB."

As emergency manager, Kunz made emergency response plans for the base, including destructive weather and a winter weather scenarios. He shared about those plans through disaster preparedness education fairs and information booths.

Additionally, he started the installation's dispatch center and Emergency Operations Center.

"We didn't have a dispatch center, we had a room over in Bldg. 7 and a policeman was doing the police and fire dispatch," Kunz said. "So I started hiring civilian dispatchers and getting them trained up to run a local dispatch center."

Naval District Washington Emergency Management Director Russell Duke said Kunz' passion for his job has helped cut through bureaucratic red tape.

"It's Ron's passion to get what needs to be put in place at Bethesda to make regional dispatch center



PHOTO BY ANDREW DAMSTEDT

Naval Support Activity Bethesda Emergency Manager Ron Kunz poses for a photo in the Emergency Operations Center, which he helped start during his seven years at NSAB.

and emergency management function as it should; to get the resources, training and equipment and get the staff organization the way it should be," he said. "He has been working hard to raise the level of performance and effectiveness. And if it wasn't for his emotion and his passion in that – in making his point very clear and being consistent – and never backing off, a lot of things wouldn't get done."

In 2015, during a report of "shots fired" on the installation – which turned out to be a false alarm – Kunz said people responded correctly by getting under desks, shutting everything off and sheltering in place.

"Thankfully, it wasn't a big deal, but that's exactly what they're supposed to do," he said. "If something happens, people can say, 'Hey, I know this. I can do this. I can be a survivor.'"

NSAB Deputy Emergency Manager Les Hiatt has worked with Kunz for the past 2.5 years.

"Ron's [departure is] going to be a great loss to the installation," Hiatt said. "He's been here for so long; he's the expert when it comes to emergency management. He knows this base inside and out."

Before working as the installation's emergency manager, Kunz worked on base from 2003 to 2006 as the command master chief for the hospital ship USNS Comfort and also as the leading chief petty officer for administrative directorate for National Naval Medical Center.

Throughout the years, he's done several education fairs disseminating emergency preparedness information, and said he's tried to "plaster his number" everywhere so people could reach him.

"I think that's the biggest thing I'm going to miss is the friends I've made over the years and the bonds we've created for good," Kunz said.

NSAB Antiterrorism Officer Hans Semple said he's enjoyed working with Kunz and swapping emergency medical technician and sea stories.

"He is a wealth of knowledge in emergency management and many other areas," Semple said. "His enthusiasm and dedication to our mission and the Navy will be missed."

His last day as emergency manager is April 20. Starting May 1, he'll become the first emergency manager at the Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research at Ft. Detrick.

"I like taking chaos and trying to put calm over it," Kunz said. "I like educating folks so I can get them empowered to take care of themselves if an emergency happens. That makes my job easier if everyone is calm and knows what they are doing."

WRNMMC, VCE Staffs Discuss Care, Rehab With Blind Veterans

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public Affairs

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and Vision Center of Excellence staff briefed members of the Blind Veterans Association and Blind Veterans UK about care and rehabilitation capabilities at the nation's flagship health care facility April 5.

The briefings at Walter Reed Bethesda were part of a week-long visit to the National Capital Region by the BVA and BVUK. The blinded veterans from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan met with key federal agency officials and senior leaders, as well as with vision rehabilitation experts to learn and share best practices which will be disseminated when participants return to their home communities and countries to promote deeper knowledge about the 100-year evolution of blind rehabilitation, war eye injury management, current vision research as well as fostering mutual respect and understanding between allied nations, according to BVA officials.

The blinded veterans spent the week recognizing the 100th anniversary of U.S. entry into World War I April 6, 2017.

WRNMMC Director Army Col. Michael S. Heimall welcomed the veterans to the medical center, and VCE Executive Director Navy Capt. Penny E. Walter briefed the group about efforts in the center to improve vision health, optimizing readiness and enhancing quality of life for service members and veterans.

Retired Army Col. (Dr.) Robert A. Mazzoli, and

ophthalmologist at the VCE, discussed 100 years of military ocular and combat casualty care, comparing lessons learned in World War I to today.

Quoting renowned physician Dr. William Mayo, Mazzoli stated, "The only victor in war is medicine," explaining the ongoing progress in medicine and surgery that is accelerated by wartime discoveries. He added lessons learned by the military often migrate to civilian practice, and civilian practice propagates those lessons. He explained eye care has become "exceptionally specialized," and "war injuries are invariably ocular polytrauma."

Mazzoli stressed the importance of wearing protective eyewear, explaining "prevention is always better than treatment." He added understanding the impact of combat ocular trauma on visual quality of life can help advance treatment, improve eye protection and assist in developing better visual rehabilitation care.

Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) Scott McClellan, chief of ophthalmology service at WRNMMC, discussed its ophthalmology clinic and the care its staff provides, and retired Army Col. (Dr.) Paul Pasquina, chief of the rehabilitation department, briefed the group about the Military Advanced Training Center. Dr. Louis French, deputy director for operations at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence at WRNMMC, briefed the veterans about facility, which specializes in traumatic brain injury care and psychological health conditions.

BVA Director of District 6 Dr. Tom Zampieri explained the relationship between the BVA and



PHOTO BY BERNARD S. LITTLE

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Director Army Col. Michael S. Heimall welcomes members of the Blind Veterans Association and Blind Veterans United Kingdom to the medical center April 5. The veterans received briefings concerning the care and capabilities for service members and veterans who suffer ocular trauma.

BVUK "allows us to share information about the 100-year evolution of veteran blind services, vision trauma care, research, and the long-standing close cooperation with our nations."

The BVUK traces its founding back to 1915 during World War I, and BVA's earliest beginnings occurred March 28, 1945 when a group of World War II blinded servicemen formally met in Connecticut.

Soldiers Come Together to “Strike Out” Sexual Assault

Photos by MC3 William Phillips

Soldiers and civilians gathered to bowl during the Strike Out Sexual Assault bowling event April 12 at the Bethesda Naval Bowling Center. The event was part of a series of events held in April at Naval Support Activity Bethesda to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.



Disrupted brain pathway, altered stress hormones key to TBI impact differences in men, women

By Sarah Marshall
USU External Affairs

The brains of men and women are wired differently, and when it comes to traumatic brain injuries (TBI), women are more likely to develop subsequent neuropsychiatric disorders, like anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Until now, it's been unclear why that is, but a new study by researchers at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) provides that missing link – a potentially disrupted pathway in the brain.

The study, “Sex-dependent effects of mild brain blast injury on neuroendocrine stress response,” was funded by the Center for Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine at USU. The findings were presented April 3 at the Endocrine Society's annual meeting by lead author Ashley Russell, a Neuroscience PhD candidate in the F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine at USU, and USU research assistant Elizabeth Shupe.

Almost every tissue in the body is affected by the interaction between the



PHOTO BY SARAH MARSHALL

Ashley Russell, left, a Neuroscience PhD candidate at the Uniformed Services University (USU), and Elizabeth Shupe, USU research assistant, together examine a slide from their study that suggests a link as to why women are more likely to develop subsequent neuropsychiatric disorders.

nervous and endocrine systems. They produce the hormones that regulate sleep, mood and metabolism. USU researchers, in collaboration with colleagues at Colorado State University, sought to better understand why it

is that blast brain injuries have a different impact on women and men, specifically in the neuroendocrine system. They conducted hormonal, behavioral and anatomical studies measuring the integrity of the body's

major neuroendocrine system, the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis. They found that a mild TBI can disrupt that system, and that alteration of stress hormones correlated with an increase in anxiety-like behavior in a sex-dependent manner. The researchers believe that uncovering the basic underlying neuroendocrine dysregulation will ultimately allow for better treatments.

Every year, about 1.5 million individuals are diagnosed with TBI, and in the military, blast brain injury is the most prevalent as a result of explosive devices used in modern warfare.

“Currently, there are no therapeutic measures to mitigate the effects of subsequent neuropsychiatric disorders after a TBI. However, these findings allow us to see how a mild TBI injury can disrupt the neuroendocrine system, which hopefully will lead to better treatment modalities and better support for our warfighters,” Russell said.

She added that these findings could also translate to other forms of TBI that may occur from a car accident or sports injury.

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